

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further examination are requested. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1 and 7 are amended. No new matter has been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-3 and 6-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takehana et al. (US 6,851,859) in view of JP (2003-322136).

Applicants submit that the claims as now pending are allowable over the cited prior art. Specifically, amended independent claim 1 recites a hydrodynamic bearing device wherein a shaft member has a tapered guide face serving as a guide when another member for holding a disk is press fitted into the shaft member, a blunting portion is formed between the guide face and the outer circumferential surface of the shaft member in an entire circumference of the shaft member, the blunting portion being a curved surface that is smoothly continuous to the guide face and the outer circumferential surface of the shaft member without forming an edge.

The cited prior art fails to disclose or render obvious such a device. In particular, as recognized by the Examiner, Takehana fails to disclose the recited tapered guide face and blunting portion formed between the guide face and the outer circumferential surface of the shaft member. For this element, the Examiner relies on JP 2003-322136 (JP'136), citing the so-called blunting portion 20a illustrated in Figs. 2 and 6. However, JP'136 recites that the guide surface 19 comprises a guide 20 and a cutting portion 21 continuously formed to the serration between the guide and the fitting portion outer peripheral surface. Additionally, JP'136 states that taper angle $\Theta 2$ is smaller than the taper angle $\Theta 1$ of the guide. See the English Abstract of JP'136. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that serrations 17 would gouge the inner peripheral surface of the cylindrical shaft portion, without cutting portion 21 to prevent such gouging. Furthermore, the cutting portion, as stated above, is "continuously formed" between to the serration between the guide and the fitting portion outer peripheral surface. Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the cutting portion 21 being "continuously formed" would mean that the cutting portion is connected to or joined with the serration, in light of the fact that JP '136 is silent with regard to the method of forming the cutting portion 21 and the shape of the boundary portion between the cutting portion and the

outer peripheral surface of the serration. Thus, based on this structure, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that an edge remains on the boundary portion of JP '136.

Therefore, Applicants submit that the cited prior art fails to disclose each of the elements of independent claim 1. Moreover, there is no reasoning to modify Takehana or JP'136 such that the combination thereof would have rendered independent claim 1 obvious. Thus, independent claim 1 and its dependent claims are allowable over the cited prior art.

With regard to independent claim 7, Applicants submit that independent claim 7 and its dependent claims are allowable for similar reasons to those set forth above. Namely, the cited prior art fails to disclose or render obvious a method for manufacturing a hydrodynamic bearing device comprising simultaneously grinding a guide face, an outer circumferential surface of a shaft member that is adjacent to the guide face, and a boundary portion between the guide face and the outer circumferential surface of the shaft member adjacent to the guide face so that a blunting portion is formed in an entire circumference of the shaft member at the boundary portion in the shape of a curved surface that is smoothly continuous to the guide face and to the outer circumferential surface without forming an edge, as recited in claim 7.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all of the claims now pending in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be allowed, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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/Jeffrey J. Howell/

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